A

SERMON

Preached before the

Incorporated Society

FOR THE

Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts;

AT THEIR

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

IN THE

Parish-Church of St. *Mary-le-Bow,*

On Friday, *February* 15. 1733.

By *ISAAC MADDOX*, D.D.
Dean of *Wells*, and Clerk of the Closet to the Queen.

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February 15. 1733.

At the Anniverſary Meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts.

AGreed, That the Thanks of the SOCIETY be given to the Reverend the Dean of *Wells*, for his Sermon Preached this Day before the SOCIETY, and that He be deſired to Print the ſame.

David Humphreys, Secretary.

TITUS II. 11, 12, 13.

The Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World, looking for that Bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

ST. *PAUL*, in the Verſes preceeding the Text, gives ſome Rules to *Titus* for his own Behaviour in *Crete*, where he was left *to ſet in Order the Things that were wanting, and to ordain Elders in every City.*

The Apoſtle likewiſe directs him to exhort the Chriſtian Converts, to diſcharge the reſpective Duties of their different Stations and Callings, ſeveral of which he diſtinctly mentions. After that, he enforces theſe particular Exhortations by a general Argument, in the Words of the Text, taken from the Deſign of Chriſtianity, the Authority by which that Religion is ſupported, and the Rewards or Puniſhments that will follow Obedience or Diſobedience to it. *For the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World, looking for that Bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

THESE Words, very ſuitably to this ſolemn Occaſion, will lead us in the firſt Place,

I. To conſider the *Nature* and *Tendency* of this Religion, intended to be ſpread in the World, the *Evidence* upon which it is founded, and the *Methods* employed for the *Propagation* of it.

THIS

THIS lays before Mankind, what the Venerable Society here preſent always deſire to have known, their whole Buſineſs and Deſign; and prepares the Way for the *Second* Part of this Diſcourſe, the recommending this Good Work to farther Encouragement and Aſſiſtance.

Firſt, As to the *Deſign* and *Tendency* of that Religion, which is to be ſpread in the dark and diſtant Places of the Earth, the Text itſelf ſets it in a very juſt and amiable Light: 'Tis *the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation that hath appeared to ALL Men*; whereby the common Father of Mankind, without Reſpect of Perſons, conſults the Happineſs of all the Sons of Men.

THE *Aſſurance* of *Forgiveneſs* to thoſe who ſincerely Repent, and the Care that is taken to ſecure their future *Obedience* by the beſt *Inſtructions* and the ſtrongeſt *Motives*, are ſubſtantial Proofs of the Grace and Goodneſs of God in this Diſpenſation.

GREAT Care is taken in this Divine Syſtem to remove thoſe *anxious Fears*, which are the Conſequence of *Guilt*, by the *full Aſſurance* of a Pardon. Full Aſ-

ſurance,

ſurance, I call it, to give this gracious Promiſe a juſt Preference to thoſe *conjectural* Hopes, thoſe *doubtful* Wiſhes; which is all that offending Creatures could entertain, without an expreſs Diſcovery of the Divine Intentions.

THE expiatory Rites and Ceremonies, the Sacrifices and Oblations, that ſo univerſally prevailed in the World, plainly ſhew the Senſe of Mankind in this particular: Fearful of deſerved Puniſhment, uncertain of a Pardon, willing to do ſomething to atone for their Crimes, to pacify an offended Deity, and, if poſſible, procure his Mercy and Favour; they were ready to offer *Thouſands of Rams, and Ten Thouſands of Rivers of Oil; to give even the Fruit of their Body for the Sin of their Soul.* Nor was this remarkable Sollicitude without Foundation; for tho' the Goodneſs of God is infinite, and his Mercy from everlaſting to everlaſting, yet no particular Perſon conſcious of Guilt, can be aſſured, without an expreſs and poſitive Declaration from his Judge, that *his* Crimes will not meet with the Puniſhment they deſerve; or that, notwithſtanding his Offences, he ſhall be fully reinſtated in the Divine Favour.

EVERY

EVERY Offender muſt be convinced, that Examples of ſtrict *Juſtice* may be of general *Uſe* in the *Government* of the World. An exact Severity upon ſome, may be highly inſtructive and beneficial to many others. What we learn from Scripture to be *really* the Caſe of fallen Spirits of an higher Order, every Sinner may juſtly dread, as *poſſible* to be his own, by the like rigorous Execution of the Law upon him. Beſides, the *deeper* the Senſe of Guilt is, and the *ſtronger* the Dread of Puniſhment in any Mind; the *Hopes* of *Pardon* and *Forgiveneſs* naturally become more *weak* and languid. In Caſes therefore, where it is moſt neceſſary to have Comfort, where a Gleam of Light would be moſt ſeaſonable and refreſhing, there, without ſure Relief from God himſelf, muſt be the greateſt Perplexity; Clouds and Darkneſs muſt give the moſt ſubſtantial Pain. But when Almighty God, who beſt knows the Maxims of his own Government, proclaims a Pardon to the Penitent, this affords ſuch ſolid Satisfaction, as cannot poſſibly ariſe from any other Conſideration.

BUT, beſides removing the anxious Fears of Puniſhment for what is paſt, the moſt

wiſe

wiſe and *proper* Methods are employed, in the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, to prevent offending in Time to come.

THE Relation of Mankind to the Creator and Governor of all Things, their Situation with reſpect to other Beings, and their own particular Make and Conſtitution, are a juſt Foundation of the reſpective Duties to thoſe different Objects: A devout Homage to Him that made us, Juſtice and Benevolence to our Fellow-Creatures, with a conſtant Endeavour to preſerve the Superiority of our rational Powers, and exerciſe a due Government over our Paſſions and Deſires. Theſe are moral Obligations, which certainly ariſe from the State and Conſtitution of Things appointed by the great Creator; nor are they deſtitute of natural Sanctions and Enforcements. But the Misfortune is, that theſe Duties, how reaſonable ſoever in themſelves, and beneficial in their Conſequences, have not been clearly underſtood, nor duly practiſed in the World. *The World by all its Wiſdom knew not God.* It has therefore ſeemed good to the indulgent Father of our Spirits, not to ſuperſede any prior Obligations, but by a Method more effectual and more obvious,

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to explain, improve, and enforce them: That where Human Faculties were bewilder'd, and Doubts and Difficulties aroſe to perplex the Thoughtful and Inquiſitive; and where vaſt Numbers, even the Bulk of the Sons of Men, could ſcarce be induced to enquire or think at all; *there*, the *expreſs Inſtructions* of Infinite Wiſdom, and the *Authority* of an Almighty Judge, might inform the *Underſtanding*, and direct the *Practice* of Mankind; to ſecure, by theſe unuſual means, a greater and more conſtant regard to every inſtance of Piety and Virtue.

'Tis needleſs to diſpute, what Notions of the Deity, what Modes of Worſhip, or Rules for ſocial Life, might *poſſibly* be framed by the utmoſt ſtretch of Human Powers, by Men of deep Penetration and great Learning. In fact, 'tis certain, that without the Aſſiſtance of Divine Revelation, and *poſitive Inſtruction* founded upon it, Mankind have ſunk into wretched Ignorance, or become the Vaſſals of its natural Offspring, wild Superſtition. Having conceived very impure Notions of the inviſible Powers, 'tis no wonder they ſhould fall into groſs Immoralities themſelves; The Face of a Publick Worſhip was indeed kept up among them; *they profeſſed they knew God, but in*

Works they denied him, being abominable and diſobedient, and unto every good Work reprobate.

THIS *Grace* of God bringing Salvation, that hath appeared to all Men, teaches them to deny all this *Ungodlineſs* and *worldly Luſts*; to renounce and forſake all Impiety, Idolatry, and Superſtition; and to abandon all thoſe impure Deſires and wicked Practices, which were the natural Effects of a Worſhip ſo corrupt. With this view, an expreſs Revelation from Heaven conveys to the World *true Notions* of the Divine Nature; enjoins a *proper Worſhip* in Spirit and in Truth, ſtrictly *enforcing* all the *Duties* of Human Life: *Duties* therein repreſented with the greateſt Plainneſs, recommended and adorned by many great and noble Inſtances of Obedience; and above all (what never happened in any Sect of Philoſophy) illuſtrated and enforced by the perfect Example of its Divine Author *Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.*

THIS Revelation was intended to teach Men in the moſt *obvious* and *eaſy* Way of Inſtruction, and with the greateſt *Weight* and *Authority* (what they had not learn'd before) *to deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly*

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in the World. It was intended to inculcate and encourage every perſonal and publick Virtue; to inſtruct Men to correct and ſubdue all thoſe irregular Paſſions, which ruffle and diſturb the Breaſts wherein they dwell, give ſo much Trouble to the reſt of the World, and are ſo highly offenſive to Almighty God; inſtead of Avarice and Ambition, Hatred and Revenge, Envy, Malice, Intemperance, and all other inordinate Deſires and Inclinations, to adorn the Mind with Sobriety and Contentment, Meekneſs and Benevolence, and with a Fortitude truly noble, that forgives Injuries, and bears Diſtreſs. But beſides *living ſoberly*, it inſtructs Men to act with Juſtice and Candour towards each other; to conſider the whole Race of Man, as the Offspring and the Image of one Heavenly Father, entitled to the ſame Meaſure of Favour and Compaſſion, which every Man (fond enough as he is of himſelf) deſires to experience in his own Caſe. *Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.* With reſpect to Almighty God, whoſe ſpiritual Nature and divine Perfections are therein explained; this Revelation commands Men to love, to reverence and adore him, to imitate his Perfections, to be merciful as our heavenly

Father is merciful, and holy as he is holy. It teaches us to own *our* conſtant *Dependance*, and *his* ſupreme *Authority*; to admire the Works of his Providence, and praiſe him for the wonderful Proofs of his Love; in particular, thankfully to acknowledge and carefully improve his Mercies in Chriſt Jeſus, who with *great Condeſcenſion* became the Author of our Salvation, *God manifeſt in the Fleſh, to deſtroy the Works of the Devil.*

IN ſhort, the Chriſtian Inſtitution is framed to *ſettle* the *Opinions* of the World, upon thoſe two moſt important Articles, *Religion* and *Morality*; 'tis deſigned to regulate the Practice, to alleviate the Fears, to raiſe the Hopes, and ſecure the Happineſs of Mankind; 'tis *the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation.*

THESE being Matters of the greateſt Importance, the Revelation in which they are contained, is ſupported by the Authority of God himſelf, acting in a Character to which he has the ſtrongeſt Title, that of Supreme Legiſlator. Hence the *Inſtructions* of the *Goſpel*, are delivered in the conciſe and poſitive *Form* of a *Law: God COMMANDETH all Men every where to repent. This is the WILL of God, even your Sanctification.*

THAT

THAT a due Obedience might be ſecured to theſe divine Commands, they are enforced by the moſt powerful and affecting Motives.

TO the conſcious Satisfaction of acting well, and the many Advantages of Religion and Virtue in the preſent State, there are added the moſt awful Sanctions in that which is to come. *Life and Immortality being brought to Light by the Goſpel.*

'TIS a very important Conſideration, that Duties, the moſt reaſonable and beneficial in themſelves, are enjoined by the Authority and expreſs Command of God himſelf, the greateſt and the beſt of Beings; to whom we are indebted for every Mercy we now enjoy, upon whom alone our future Hopes depend; add to this, the *certain Expectation* of a Day of *Retribution*; *looking for that Bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* Thoſe expreſs Declarations that are made in Holy Writ, in what Manner a Being of infinite Knowledge and infinite Power will hereafter Reward or Puniſh, give the greateſt Weight to the important Precepts of the Goſpel; as they deeply affect *every Individual* of the Human Race: For *God will render to* EVERY *Man according to his Deeds; to them who by patient*

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Continuance in Well-doing, ſeek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality; eternal Life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteouſneſs, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh, upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil.

As to the *Proofs* of this Religion, which is the next Particular to be conſidered, they are clear and ſtrong.

To *teſtify* the *Divine Original* of this Revelation, in which Matters of ſo great Conſequence are contained, and likewiſe to *ſupport* and animate the *firſt Publiſhers* of it, under the heavy *Perſecutions* that fell to their Lot; to give the greater and *more affecting Certainty* to the *Threatnings* of Puniſhment, and the *Promiſe* of Pardon and Happineſs therein made; and alſo to *awaken* and rouſe more effectually the *Attention* of Mankind, too negligent of their Duty: many wonderful Events appeared in Confirmation of the Chriſtian Doctrine. Numerous *Predictions*, very minute and circumſtantial, made *Ages before* of *unuſual Facts*, beyond all *Human* Foreſight or Conjecture, were punctually *fulfilled*. Various aſtoniſhing *Changes*, and ſurpriſing *Interruptions* were made in the *Courſe of Nature*: GOD *himſelf bearing Witneſs to this Heavenly Doctrine*,

trine, by Signs and Wonders, by diverſe Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt. A Doctrine, that in the Hands of a few poor, honeſt, unlearned Men, *overcame* the moſt *popular Prejudices*, and ſubdued the favourite Paſſions of Mankind: A Doctrine, ſo far from being a *Trick* of *State*, or the *Invention* of *Politicians*, or of *Prieſts*, that it *ſpread* and *flouriſhed* under the *oppreſſive Power* of the *Secular Arm*, and encountred all the *Oppoſition*, that *Malice* or that *Intereſt* could ſuggeſt to the *Jewiſh* and the *Heathen* Prieſthood.

A DOCTRINE, whoſe *genuine* Goodneſs, whoſe engaging Excellence, and *intrinſic* Worth, ſupported by Divine Credentials, gave it a ſpeedy and extenſive Propagation in the World.

THE quick and ſucceſsful *Progreſs* this Religion made, could *only* be owing to the Force of *Truth*, and the *Certainty* of thoſe mighty *Works* wrought in Confirmation of it. In Matters of *Reaſoning* and Speculation, *Miſtakes* are frequently and eaſily committed: But the *Foundation* of the *Goſpel* is laid upon *ſurer* Ground, plain and obvious *Facts*; thoſe publick Miracles wrought by our Bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtles. To *theſe*, both He and They *appeal* for the Conviction

viction of their Audience; To *theſe*, afterwards in their Epiſtles, they *refer* the Chriſtian Converts, as to Facts which they themſelves knew to be unqueſtionably true. Such open and publick Appeals, ſo near the Time the Facts happened, are upon no Principles to be accounted for, if the Miracles thus produced in Evidence had never been performed. There likewiſe ariſes a very ſtrong *Confirmation* of theſe miraculous Works, from the *dying Teſtimony* of thoſe, who (under God) were the *Authors*, or the immediate *Spectators* of them. Enthuſiaſm, Error, and Superſtition have, no doubt, had zealous Votaries; Men have died for very abſurd Notions, different Perſons for contradictory Opinions and Speculations. But for great Numbers of Men to lay down their Lives, not in ſupport of a meer Opinion, but in Confirmation of plain Matters of Fact; Facts which muſt fall under the Obſervation of their own Senſes, which they aſſerted to be really true, when they certainly knew them to be abſolutely falſe; for Numbers of Men to part with their Lives in ſuch a Cauſe, without any Proſpect or Chance of worldly Advantage, is a Behaviour contrary to all the Principles of Human Nature, and of which no Inſtance can be given.

THESE

THESE are Proofs of Chriſtianity not to be confuted; and if duly conſidered, not poſſible to be withſtood.

'TIS this Religion, ſo worthy of the great Governor of the Univerſe, built upon the moſt ſolid Foundations, extremely conducive, beyond every other Scheme, to the Peace and Happineſs of Society in general, and to the preſent Comfort and future Salvation of every individual Member of it: 'Tis a *Religion* thus *excellent* in itſelf, thus clearly impreſt with the Signatures of a *Divine Authority*, that THIS SOCIETY, with the Bleſſing of Almighty God, the Author of it, deſires to ſpread and continue in the Weſtern World; To ſpread and ſupport it by all the *rational* and *proper* Methods of ſoft and gentle *Perſwaſion*, and thoſe only, enforced by that moſt prevailing Argument, a virtuous and good Example. In obedience to the *Precept*, and Conformity to the *Practice* of the *Bleſſed Founder* of this Religion, they endeavour the Propagation of it, in the Spirit of *Meekneſs*, by the *ſingle* Force of *Truth:* Greatly deſirous that *no Violence* ſhould be uſed in the *Cauſe of Religion*; nothing to hurt or to deſtroy; but that the *Means* employed to *make Converts*, ſhould correſpond with the *Deſign* of that *Revelation* they are

taught to embrace; *Glory to God in the highest, on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men.* —— Thus have we briefly ſeen, the Nature and Tendency of the Chriſtian Inſtitution, the Evidence by which it is ſupported, and the Means employed for the Propagation of it. We may now proceed to the *Second* Thing propoſed, The *Recommending* this *good Work* to farther *Encouragement* and *Aſſiſtance.*

IT would be extremely wrong upon this Occaſion, not to bring to Remembrance ſome of thoſe weighty Conſiderations, which have with great Judgment and Propriety been offered by many eminent Prelates, and other learned Divines, from this Place. The Buſineſs is ſtill the ſame, and the ſame Neceſſity continues, for deſiring Aſſiſtance in the Proſecution of it. The Work itſelf, how often ſoever repreſented, and the Methods by which it is carried on, will, 'tis to be hoped, recommend ſo good a Deſign to the Favour and Encouragement of every ſerious and compaſſionate Mind.

THE Deſign is *large* and *extenſive*, greatly *beneficial* and *important*. 'Tis no leſs than to continue and ſpread the Chriſtian Religion, that uſeful, that Divine Doctrine, in the

the vaſt Regions of *America*, ſubject to the *Britiſh* Dominion; and to carry it forward into the adjoining Countries of the *Indian* Nations. Our own Settlements and Plantations afford much Work: Beſides the *Native Engliſh* with which they are Peopled, they abound with prodigious Numbers of poor unhappy *Negro Slaves*. A *Continent* that reaches above *Fifteen hundred Miles* from North to South, beſides many *Iſlands*, cannot be ſupplied with Churches and Teachers ſufficient to keep up a Senſe of Religion, and preſerve the publick Worſhip of God, without a very *great* and *conſtant Expence*. In ſome Places indeed publick Proviſion is made; but far the greateſt Part is deſtitute of Help among themſelves, and depends upon the kind Aſſiſtance of this Society.

THE Support of Religion in thoſe vaſt Territories, ſlender as the Allowance to the Preachers is, unavoidably requires a large and continual Supply.

OUR *own People*, 'tis to be feared, generally *carry Abroad* with them *too little* Regard for *Religion*, and no great Acquaintance with the Principles, or the Proofs of it.

THE ſlender Portion of Knowledge which they export, is ſoon loſt in Places, where

there is no Inſtruction to encreaſe, or even preſerve it. Their Children and Servants, having no better Teachers than theſe ignorant Superiors, muſt ſtill be more ignorant; and in a Generation or two, the little Knowledge that was firſt carried over, is worn away, and in a manner quite extinct. For want of Schools, and religious Inſtruction, a Race of Men ſoon appears ſtupidly ignorant, and of courſe, groſsly negligent of true Religion and Virtue; Till by the Miſchiefs of a total Diſregard of Divine Worſhip, they are fully convinced of its Uſefulneſs and Value, as they ſenſibly feel how dear they pay for the Want of it.

To preſerve and continue the Chriſtian Religion in *ſuch* Places, may be juſtly called the Propagation of it. 'Tis, in a manner, introducing Chriſtianity again among them; 'tis reviving that Doctrine where it is almoſt forgot; and tranſmitting it down to ſucceeding Generations, in which it would otherwiſe be quite unknown.

As the *Importance* of the *Plantations* to the *Wealth* and *Power* of *Britain*, is now ſo well underſtood, it muſt upon *all* Accounts appear highly *neceſſary* to introduce and preſerve among them the Principles of *Religion*, with its *uſeful Train* of Virtues, beneficial

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to Us as well as to Them, *Induſtry* and *Frugality*, *Temperance* and *Honeſty*.

In the Courſe of Divine Providence, 'tis always found, that a general Diſregard and *Contempt* of *Religion*, is attended with great *Diſſoluteneſs* of *Manners*; Perſonal Virtues are little practiſed, all ſocial Regard and true publick Spirit, nay, common Honeſty and fair Dealing, are neglected and laid aſide; the moſt wholeſome Laws are broken, and Government itſelf deſpiſed: The *Wiſeſt* and the *Beſt* of Men, have therefore judged the *publick Worſhip* of God *reaſonable* in itſelf, and highly *uſeful* in the World.

The Meeting in *one* regular and peaceable *Aſſembly*, to acknowledge the *Goodneſs* and *Authority* of the ſame Heavenly Father; to offer joint Petitions for the ſame Bleſſings upon the Petitioners themſelves, and the whole Human Race; as it *preſerves* a juſt *Awe* of *God* upon the Mind, ſo it *unites* Men together, brings them to a *ſocial* Diſpoſition, and improves all the natural Sentiments of *Juſtice*, *Benevolence*, and *Friendſhip*.

Besides; the *Reſting* from the *Labour* and Hurry of conſtant Employment, to make a Pauſe, and conſider the Religious and Moral Part of Life, is not more neceſſary to *refreſh* the *Body*, than it is uſeful to *improve* the

the *Mind.* It gives Time for, and with proper Inſtruction, leads Men to ſerious Reflection; and ſerious Reflection ſeldom fails of producing good Effects.

NOR have the common Affairs of Life, the Buſineſs and the Commerce of the World, ever been carried on without ſome *Appeal* to the *Higher Powers:* An OATH *for Confirmation* has, in every Age, been accounted *the End of all Strife.* The *Effect* of this ſolemn Invocation, wherein the *Security* of a *Government*, *Property*, *Reputation*, and even *Life* itſelf are ſo deeply *concerned*, altogether *depends* upon the *Regard* that is paid to the *Deity*, by him that ſwears.

WHEN once Men become regardleſs of Religion, have no juſt Senſe of the *Knowledge* and the *Power* of the Almighty, to *puniſh* their Falſhood; 'tis no wonder if *Perjury*, pernicious and fatal as it is, greatly prevail in the World.

NOR can it be at all expected that thoſe, who deſpiſe the Authority, and defy the Power of God himſelf, ſhould treat their Fellow Creatures, whatever be their Rank, with more Reſpect and Reverence, than they ſhew to the *King of Kings*, *the Lord of Lords*, *the Bleſſed and only Potentate.* They who are not afraid of the Moſt High, that ruleth

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in Heaven, will ſtand in no great Awe of the Powers, that govern upon Earth. 'Tis natural for ſuch *ignorant* and *preſumptuous Men to deſpiſe Dominion, and ſpeak Evil of Dignities.* But melancholy and diſagreeable as this Proſpect is, it muſt be viewed a little farther.

FROM the Want of a due Senſe of Religion, and from a Neglect of the true Worſhip of God, Men not only grow leſs juſt and beneficent to each other, leſs dutiful and obedient to their lawful Superiors, leſs fearful of an Oath, and are more eaſily induced to take a falſe one; but in the Event, this muſt certainly diſſolve the Bands of Union among Mankind, and deſtroy the very Being of Society. From this ſad State of Irreligion and Immorality, Men eaſily ſink into an ignorant and ſavage Barbarity. When they have learned to deſpiſe Human Laws, which to ſuch Men is an eaſy Leſſon, and own the Authority of no common Superior to influence and awe them; when there are no mutual Ties, no common Principles to hold them together, they muſt neceſſarily break in pieces, and by *unavoidable Interferings* in Intereſt, or Pleaſure, become mutual Enemies. Thus the Apoſtle deſcribes their Caſe, *ſerving diverſe Luſts and Pleaſures,*

ſures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful and hating one another. The Principles of true Religion not being inculcated and cheriſhed, the Knowledge of it, muſt gradually decreaſe and wear away. From this ſad State of *Ignorance*, Men naturally fall into groſs *Superſtition.* 'Tis the common Tranſition from having no Religion at all, to chooſe the very worſt. —— So diſagreeable is this Picture of Mankind, ſo ſhocking to every conſiderate Mind, that for the Honour of Human Nature, one would wiſh to draw a Veil over it: But too many of our Fellow Creatures feel the Certainty of it. To take notice therefore of their deep Diſtreſs, is neceſſary to move *Compaſſion* towards *them*, and to *preſerve others* from falling into the *like* Calamity.

THE Conſiderations that have been offered, are ſufficient to ſhew the Neceſſity there is of preſerving a Senſe of Religion among the Inhabitants of our Foreign Settlements, both for their Sakes, and *our own*, if it is deſired they ſhould be uſeful and advantageous to this Kingdom. What has been ſaid, is not mere Surmiſe and Speculation, but is confirmed by Evidence too ſtrong and convincing. Whatever may be falſely thought of the ſufficient Security and Happineſs of

a People, where ſome Degrees of Knowledge, a few Beams of Light ſtill remain; yet when the Ignorance becomes exceeding great, the Darkneſs almoſt total, their Condition is apparently wretched and deplorable.

REPEATED Accounts and Deſcriptions of the Coaſt of *Guinea*, from whence our Slaves come, and other Parts of *Africa*, furniſh melancholy Proof of the miſerable State of poor Creatures, deſtitute of the Knowledge of true Religion, who have ſubſtituted in the Room of it (as is uſual in their Condition) the moſt ſuperſtitious, abſurd, and impious Ceremonies. "They are "all without Exception (ſays an Author of "good Credit, * who dwelt among them) "crafty, villainous, and fraudulent; being "ſure to ſlip no Opportunity of cheating "an *European*, nor indeed one another; "They ſeem to be born and bred Villains; "all Sorts of Baſeneſs having got ſuch footing among them, 'tis impoſſible to lie "concealed. Theſe degenerate Vices are "accompanied with Sloth and Idleneſs, to "which they are ſo prone, that nothing but "the utmoſt Neceſſity can force them to "Labour. Murder, Adultery, and Theft, "are here accounted no Sins.

* See *Boſman*'s Deſcription of the Coaſt of *Guinea*.

'TIS no wonder that Superſtitions, ſo impious and abſurd as thoſe which prevail among them, ſhould give Riſe and Encouragement to Practices, the moſt pernicious and immoral.

THO' ſome of the *Indians* upon the *American* Continent, are not in every reſpect ſo abominably bad, yet many fooliſh and *wicked Superſtitions* prevail among that uninſtructed People; many and great Immoralities, *Rapin* and *horrid Cruelties*, are univerſally committed by them.

OTHER Parts of the World might be produced as Proofs, that where no juſt Principles of Religion obtain among the People, they degenerate into great Barbarity, and become almoſt Savages: But I mention the *Blacks* and *Indians*, becauſe with ſuch this Society is more immediately concerned, in the *Engliſh* Settlements.

OUR own People are in great Hazard, without Aſſiſtance from hence, of falling into the like unhappy State of Ignorance and Wickedneſs. The Generality of them, as was obſerved before, carry abroad a ſlender Share of Knowledge, which muſt *ſoon* be *loſt* in their Circumſtances; where *Neceſſity* cloſely engages ſo many in providing for their Subſiſtance, and the eager Deſire *ſpeedily*

dily to raiſe a Fortune, and *return Home*, engroſſes the Thoughts of others. Were theſe People left to themſelves, very few would find Time ſeriouſly to think of Religion. In many Places they are not able, from their own Stock, to provide for the publick Support of Divine Worſhip. Of this there needs no other Proof, than the many *earneſt Letters* and *Petitions*, penned with an honeſt Simplicity, by well diſpoſed Perſons among themſelves, who ſenſibly *feel* the growing Evil. Under this Conviction they offer to contribute their utmoſt, in ſome Places to continue, in others to introduce the Worſhip of God; and declare themſelves ready to erect Churches for this Purpoſe, where they have not yet been able to build commodious Habitations for themſelves. Theſe *importunate Petitions*, from People who actually ſuffer the Inconveniencies complained of, have been frequently *ſupported* by ſtrong Repreſentations from their *Governors*, equally expreſſive of the *Neceſſity* there is to preſerve a Senſe of Religion, by Inſtruction ſent from hence. Such moving Entreaties, thus confirmed, ſhould awaken in every Breaſt the Sentiments of Humanity and Religion, tho' there were no peculiar Obligation to conſider

them as *Countrymen* and Fellow-Subjects. All who enjoy any Advantages from theſe uſeful Plantations; and who is there that does not receive ſome Pleaſure or Profit from their Productions? All, who enjoy Advantages from the Labour of theſe People, ſhould lend a kind Aſſiſtance in a Point ſo eſſential to their Welfare. Thoſe eſpecially, who have *improved* their *Fortunes* by Commerce with theſe Countries, are under uncommon Obligations, to teſtify their Gratitude to a kind Providence, that has diſtinguiſhed them from the Poor Inhabitants, whoſe Care and Induſtry have been the Foundation of their Affluence and Eaſe.

'TIS a very important and extenſive Part of this Society's Concern, to continue and encreaſe a Senſe of Religion among the *Engliſh*, who inhabit thoſe large and numerous Settlements, that belong to this Kingdom.

BUT beſides the Care of our own People, the Society earneſtly recommends the miſerable Caſe of their unhappy *Negro Slaves*. The harder State of Bondage theſe poor Creatures, engaged in Labour for our Pleaſure and Advantage, muſt now endure; the more reaſonable it is, to alleviate that Diſtreſs, by furniſhing their Minds with good Principles. The Proſpects of future

Happi-

Happineſs, would make their preſent Servitude more eaſy: The Inſtructions of Chriſtianity, would correct thoſe evil Diſpoſitions, Falſhood, Sullenneſs, Revenge, and Cruelty, which are too often found among them. As they greatly ſtand in need of being taught, ſo it appears by many Inſtances, they don't want a Capacity to learn. Thoſe who are advanced in Years, and remember their Native Country, which, bad as it is, has always ſtrong Attractives, may be more obſtinate and unteachable; yet others, not ſo far advanced in Life, eſpecially Children born there, might with greater Eaſe be taught the Principles of Religion and Virtue; and thereby render'd more faithful and more uſeful to their Maſters. 'Tis a *conſtant Direction* to every *Miniſter* employed Abroad, to *inſtruct* the *Negroes* that belong to the Inhabitants allotted to his Care. *Peculiar* Teachers, or *Catechiſts*, are likewiſe appointed for this good Purpoſe; nor have the Endeavours uſed for inſtructing theſe poor Creatures been without Succeſs. The *Annual Accounts* of the Proceedings of the Society, furniſh frequent Inſtances of their Converſion. To carry on the good Work more effectually, a *particular Fund* is appointed for that Purpoſe, which

which has received Aſſiſtance from ſeveral pious and charitable Hands; but ſtill falls ſhort, very ſhort, of what is abſolutely neceſſary to accompliſh the compaſſionate Deſign.

BUT there is ſtill more Work upon this great Continent; beſides the *Engliſh* Inhabitants and their Negro Slaves, there are *dark Corners* of the Earth, now *the Habitations of Cruelty*. The Condition of whole Nations of bordering *Indians*, loudly calls for Pity and Aſſiſtance. Care ſhould be taken, *firſt to civilize* their rude and ſavage Manners, to form them into regular Societies, and inſtruct them in the Uſe and Practice of Manual Arts; to bring them to what, they ſeem greatly to want, a Senſe of *Good* and *Evil*, *Virtue* and *Vice*. For whatever may be thought of the Worſhip obſerved among them, it amounts to little more than deprecating, with ſtrange Superſtitions, the Calamities they feel; or praying for ſome temporal Benefit they want. Such Worſhip is no Proof of a Senſe of *moral* Obligation, or that they conſider the Deity as a Judge of their moral Conduct. Their uncivilized *manner* of *Life*, their *horrid Cruelty*, their *hurtful Superſtitions*, and *groſs Ignorance*, plead ſtrongly for better

ter Inſtruction. But if the Reverſe happen to them, 'tis their great Misfortune to come under the Tutorage of ſuch cruel Neighbours. Heavy is their Load of Guilt, who, inſtead of civilizing and reforming theſe poor ignorant Creatures, teach them a new Vice; firſt learn them *Drunkenneſs*, and then pour in upon them vaſt Quantities of intoxicating Liquors, to ſpread the wicked and deſtructive Practice, that has *already* made *dreadful Havock*, and muſt in a little Time depopulate whole Countries. How different is the Management of our powerful Neighbours in the *French* Settlements? They wiſely endeavour to civilize, to ſoften and inſtruct the wild *Indians*; and by promoting *Intermarriages* with them, unite them to their own People. This at once enlarges their Territories, and increaſes the Number of uſeful Hands, to cultivate and improve them. How far it is proper for us to imitate this Practice in every Particular, it little becomes me to determine.

THE *Inſtruction* of theſe *Neighbouring Indians*, and of thoſe mixt with our own People in *New England* and *New York*, the Society here preſent has earneſtly recommended. Their beſt Endeavours have been employed, and are ſtill continued, eſpecially among

among thoſe *Indians* that border upon *Albany*. But for this, as well as their other good Deſigns, they ſtand in need of farther Aſſiſtance and Encouragement. That kind Providence, which has already inſpired ſo many worthy Benefactors, Friends of Religion and Virtue, and of courſe Lovers of Mankind, will, they hope, greatly *encreaſe* the Number. Their *certain Annual Income*, bears a very *ſmall Proportion* to their *certain* and ENCREASING *Annual Expence*, in Miſſionaries, Catechiſts, and Schoolmaſters; together with a conſtant Supply of neceſſary and uſeful Books, and many other incidental Charges.

THE Work itſelf is noble and important; 'tis no leſs than to promote the preſent and future Happineſs of great Numbers of our Fellow Creatures, who inhabit ſuch vaſt Countries. As the *Engliſh* Settlements ſpread, the Care of the Society enlarges. No ſooner is a new Country peopled, but a tender Regard is ſhown to the Infant Colony. Thus, the poor Inhabitants of GEORGIA, ſcarce ſettled there, are already ſupplied with a Miniſter by *this* Society. A Society, whoſe only Buſineſs it is, to ſpread the beſt Religion, where there is the greateſt Want of it. To publiſh among the Ignorant

rant and the Vitious, that *Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, teaching all Men, to deny Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, and live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World; looking for that Bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

'Tis to be hoped, no proper Encouragement and Support will ever be wanting to a Work like this; where *Humanity* and *Religion*, where the *Happineſs* of our *Fellow Creatures*, the *Good* of our *Country*, and the *Glory* of *God*, are ſo greatly concerned. A Work ſo *important*, and ſo very *extenſive*, can only be ſupported by *generous* and *bountiful* Supplies: A Deſign ſo *uſeful* and *advantageous*, is not to be carried on *Grudgingly*, or of *Neceſſity*; but with a *free* Heart and *liberal* Hand: God *loveth*, and will certainly *reward* every *chearful* Giver.

F I N I S.